From: John Weisheit <john@livingrivers.org>
Subject: **tar sands talking points 2**
Date: July 27, 2010 3:52:46 PM MDT
To: John Weisheit <john@livingrivers.org>

My Name is John Weisheit. I am 56 years old and have recreated on the Colorado River and its tributaries my entire life. I also work on the Colorado River as a professional river guide and have done so for over 30-years. My first river trip through the Uinta Basin was in 1980 and my last trip was just one week ago.

I am also an author. I shared in the writing of an environmental and human history of the rIvers in Canyonlands National Park. The publisher of this book was the University of Utah. The purpose of this book was to document 125 years of physical and biological change in river corridor of the Green and Colorado Rivers in the Canyonland National Park.

In the year 2000, I and other river activists founded Living Rivers, a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring the biological integrity of the Colorado River watershed. Before receiving our non-profit status from the Internal Revenue Service we were a project of the Center for Biological Diversity. Today we in turn are fiscal sponsors to four programs, namely Colorado Riverkeeper, Uranium Watch, Canyonlands Watershed Council, and River Runners for Wilderness. Colorado Riverkeeper is actually a franchise with the Waterkeeper Alliance, which is an international organization headquartered along the Hudson River in New York state.

I would like to start with a simple request, which is to ask that the administrative record for the PR Springs Mine remain open until 90 days after the conditional use permit from Grand County is, or is not, granted.

Essentially, this is a project of diminishing returns. It really has no real value or contribution to society. I see no merit in this operation whatsoever and I hope investors will instead consider viable renewable alternatives for our energy needs. The energy that this mining operation will provide to the domestic needs of this nation, at its conclusion of seven years of operation, is only worth 4 hours of energy consumption for this consumer nation. However, it will take millenniums to restore the watershed they are about to destroy. I am truly dissappointed in earth enegy resources for wasting our time and resources to process this application.

MASS WASTING ON THE TAVAPUTS PLATEAU

When it comes to mass wasting, the shales of the Uinta Basin take the lead in producing debris flows on the Colorado Plateau. For example, the entire riverbed in Desolation Canyon is perched, probably by a couple hundred feet, above bedrock as a result of accumulating amounts of alluvium and sediment from side canyon debris flows that enter the Green River during or after cloudbursts.

We want to ask that EER, in revising the operation plan for the West Pit in the future, that they address this issue of potential slope failure during a cloudburst in more detail and specifically to address this unique physical characteristic of the Uinta Basin.

THE WATER WELL

In the revised operating plan, we also want to know how EER is assured that the well they are getting water from will not run dry. The amount of water required is 360 acre feet annually for a period of 7 years. For example, is this a confined aquifer and does earth energy really know the volume of water in this aquifer?

Another question we have is, will this well be monitored during the 7 years and beyond for possible contaimination from the waste piles?

WATER CONSUMPTION

The NOI states that as much as 2 barrels of water is needed to produce 1 barrel of bitumen. Does this also include the water to control fugitive dust? Does it account for the water to grow and process the citrus-based chemicals? Does it include the water necessary to provide the final refining process? If not, what is the total water consumption for these activities?

Mexican Spotted Owl

The 9th district appellant court recently decided in June that critical habitat for Mexican spotted owl does not include only nesting habitat only, but instead also includes he foraging range of this nocturnal bird. I think this is new information and ask that EER & DOGM consult with the state and federal wildlife agencies. Could you please respond to this matter in the upcoming revision?

LIGHT POLLUTION

I would now like to talk about light pollution for a moment.

You can see Dinosaur National Monument from PR Springs. If Earth Energy is going to work night shifts at this facility, then it is going to require high illumination for safety. So my question is how much illumination are we talking about and have you consulted with the National Park Service about this impact? If not, then I think it would be an appropriate consultation. Will you do this?

THE DIMINISHING STREAMFLOW OF THE COLORADO RIVER

I am also going to talk about, and later provide a request to this board, about the impacts of this proposed strip mining project as it relates to streamflow reductions of the Colorado River due to exorbitant carbon dioxide emissions to operate and refine bitumin, and about the fugitive dust that will likely fall on regional snowpacks, and how this project will cause harm to the seven basin sates, the tribes, mexico and the endangered fish recovery programs. This project will create burdens for the watershed to bear.

It must be appreciated by this board that the federal government and the states currently spend millions of dollars every month to physically and biologically recover the ever diminishing quantity and quality of water resources in the Colorado River basin.

For example, according to the Bureau of Reclamation, which is presently undergoing a $2 million basin study in cooperation with the seven states (including Utah) and tribes of the Colorado River Basin, the Colorado River has nothing left to give. At their initial workshop this last winter the Bureau publicly stated that the rising trend of consumption now exceeds the decreasing trend of supply. The Bureau of Reclamation is currently modeling the supply of the Colorado River using data from the 1,200 year tree-ring record as the baseline flow and is also modeling 16 General Circulation Models to determine the future streamflow losses consequent to climate change. This exercise is due to a mandate from Congress and the Department of interior to adapt to climate change, especialy for the Colorado River basin because science has demonstrated that the Colorado River has the most to lose in regards to rising atmospheric temperatures.

The University of Colorado at Boulder has already completed a similar study, which indicates that in less than 4 decades greenhouse gases will take 3 million acre feet of water from the users of the Colorado RIver. THis is a very serious manner and the state of Utah must consult with the other six states of the Colorado River Compact before approving the extraction of heavy oils from the Uinta Basin. This means that eventually somebody or some organization in Utah will not have water to meet their daily needs as a result of vanishing appropriations.

Another atmospheric condition that is robbing the Colorado River and its tributaries of surface water is fugitive dust, because when it falls on snowpack reserves in the high mountains and plateaus, it causes premature melt, evaporation and/or sublimation. The 24 hours of operation, for 350 days a year, from this project's blasting, mining, and transporting of bitumen, will cause considerable dust on snow conditions.

The USGS and the University of Utah have demonstrated that once soils on the Colorado Plateau are disturbed, they are usually lifted into the atmosphere as fugitive dust or are washed into the Colorado River system of reservoirs.

The Colorado Rockies and the high plateaus of the Colorado Plateau are watersheds for a sole-source river that provides drinking water and food for 30 million people and produces an annual trillion dollar economy. It is not a sacrifice zone for inappropriate strip mining activities. THis function is vastly more important than the 4 hours of total energy fuels that this project would contribute to the daily consumptive needs of the USA.

Therefore, this issue compels the question that this mining activity needs to be broadened in scope and outreach to include the concerns of the seven basin states, the tribes and Mexico. Utah has patnerships with these people. It is a good neighbor policy that should be pursued.

I seriously doubt the water purveyors of the basin states are even aware of this proposed mining activity in the watershed of the Uinta Basin. But we do know they care. For example, once the Grand County Council brought it to their attention, the Metropolitan Water District was influential in establishing the project in Moab that is now removing the Atlas Corporation's uranium tailings pile from the banks of the Colorado River.

I formally ask that a comment period for this proposal to strip mine tar sands in the Uinta Basin be opened and presented to the six other states of the greater watershed. Also with the tribes and Mexico, and the recovery programs for the endangered fish.

I also think you have to inform congressman Raul Grivalja, for example, of this potential mining activity, because he has introduced a bill in Congress called the Lower Colorado River Protection Act. The intent of this legislation is to mitigate pollution from uranium mining, rocket fuel contamination, endocrine disruptors, salinity, and nitrate pollution from

septic tanks. Increased pollution from upper basin activities related to strip mining heavy oils could render the mitigation efforts from this proposed legislation moot.

So will the board take this request under consideration and reply?

NOTE: If not then I appeal to Earth Energy to drop this case until this state and the federal government get there act together on climate change legislation and not take advantage of this political impasse.

A barrel of oil is worth $80 dollars as of July 2010
Daily production gross: 2000 bbls x $80 = $160,000
Annual production gross: (350 days) = $56,000,000
Seven-year production gross: $392,000,000

This means there is 4.9 million barrels of sour crude at this 213 acre site
205,800,000 gallons
682 acre-feet of sour crude oil

Daily consumption oil per day in USA 19.5 million barrels
819,000,000 gallons per day
Nine hours of water flow from Glen Canyon Dam

PR Springs will provide the USA with 4 hours of oil energy, without counting the oil energy it takes to mine and produce this energy.
The 5,930 acres under lease by EER would provide the USA with 4.6 days of oil energy.

So my question to you, is what exactly is the point of this exercise, because it is indeed the biggest waste of time, energy and resources I have ever seen in my life and I would be, frankly, embarrassed to even present this to the American public under the auspices of saying this is a clean, efficient and prosperous business enterprise, as your website claims.

Is this 213 acre site the best site of the 5,930 acres currently leased by EER? the average yield? or the worst possible yield?

Of this 392 million gross, what is the estimated return of profit in percent? 50%? 25%? 10%?

If the question is not answered, then how are we to know the feasibility of the project? Is that not what this pilot project is about--feasibility? This is why this sector of the public is outraged.

9,000 gallons is the capacity of a tanker truck
214 barrels
9.5 tanker trucks per day full
9.5 tanker trucks per day empty
19 runs total
46,000 tanker truck runs per life of the project

Water

Water usage figures must include the water to produce the Citrus solvent
For example, how much water is consumed to make this solvent? This consumption includes the water to grow the citrus and the water to produce the solvent. How much energy does it take to produce and transport this solvent?

How much solvent in barrels does EER need on a yearly basis to process tar sands?

How much water will it take to mitigate the fugitive dust problem on a yearly basis.

Debris flows
What is the percent of clay in the waste material. Are you absolutely sure the waste piles will not slough into the canyon bottoms during a cloudburst. For example, have you performed a simulation or test to confirm that the waste piles will not catastrophically fail?

Chemicals
EER claims there chemical wash is proprietary information. If the public is not allowed to have this information, then it is

appropriate to conclude that the chemical composition of the solvent is indeed toxic. We have no information at all to satisfy curiosity one way or the other.